

A Sketch of The Life
Of
Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy
Of Londonderry, N. H.

By The
Rev. Jesse G. MacMurphy



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Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy, was a son of Alexander and Janet MacMurphy of Londonderry, N. H. He was born July 8, 1731 according to the Records of the Town of Londonderry. At that time the Town clerk was John MacMurphy, Esquire, a Justice of the Peace, and of the Quoram of the Great and General Court of His Majesty's Province of New Hampshire in New England. The children of Alexander and Jean MacMurphy were, probably; John, born about 1720, George about 1722, and then January 18, 1724, the wife died; Alexander MacMurphy married again, and the children of this second marriage were: Jean MacMurphy, daughter of Alexander and Janet MacMurphy, born October 27, 1726, according to the Town Records, Alexander, son of Alexander and Jenet MacMurphy born April 1, 1728. Daniel MacMurphy, born July 8, 1731, and James MacMurphy born July 23, 1733. The part of Londonderry, where the children of Alexander and Jenet MacMurphy were born, is in the eastern section, near Chester line. The homestead is clearly shown on the maps of the town given in Willy's Book of Nutfield at page 214. The homestead of fifty acres is now in 1914, adjoins the estate of Katherine J. Adams, of Derry, N. H.

The early years of our Worthy Patriot were spent on this homestead, but were unhappily clouded with the early death of his father, by drowning in the Powow River at Kingston, a neighboring town, on February 19, 1734. It was several days later, that his body was recovered and brought to Londonderry for burial, in the old grave yard of the first settlers. Nothing can be said of the education of Daniel MacMurphy, the family was broken up, and the sons scattered to earn their own living. The estate which included the homestead, second division and amendment lands, was sold and the proceeds divided by agreement. Some of the deeds of sale indicate quitclaims to various members of the family. In 1755 he was 24 years of age, and on January 8th quitclaimed all his interest in his honored father's estate to his brother Alexander MacMurphy for 370 pounds.

Then it appears that he went to New Boston, N. H., and bought a farm. By looking at the Diary of Matthew Patten, on the date of January 10, 1758, it will be seen, that Daniel MacMurphy had a wife and was living in New Boston. By tradition we learn, that his wife's maiden name was Mary Tolford. By farther reference to the Diary, it appears that Jean MacMurphy,

sister of Daniel MacMurphy, made her home with her brother in New Boston, February 2, 1759, and again mentioned March 10, 1759. Again March 4, 1761, it is shown that Daniel MacMurphy was at work upon building a bridge over the Piscataquog River, and his cousin, Matthew Patten drew up his account for settlement with the selectmen. In this period of unsettled home and business, it is very difficult to assign the order and birth of children, in the family of Daniel and Mary Tolford MacMurphy.

In The Wilderness.

There is a possibility of mixing history in the pursuit of the family of Daniel MacMurphy, for there was another Daniel MacMurphy, son of Archibald and Elizabeth Brown MacMurphy of Londonderry of this period. But here is a tangible clew to our particular subject, February 5, 1890. Alonzo Tuttle of Hillsborough Bridge, wrote me, that he could give some tradition of this Daniel MacMurphy, and said "I am living on the farm, that he lived on once. We have but one copy of the Old Annals, I would not want to dispose of that; do not know of any one that has one to spare. Will copy out some that there is in it. The second settlement was commenced about the year 1762 by Daniel MacMurphy, who

came from Cheshire, now Chester, of this state, and fixed his residence on Bible Hill. The traces of his cellar are yet visible in the orchard of Dea. F. W. Symonds (that is the place I now own.)

On one occasion, he was absent at Cheshire, more than two weeks leaving his wife entirely alone, no one nearer than New Boston; one night she went out from her hut, and cried aloud at the hight of her voice, that she might hear the responsive echo resounding through the forest. Mr. MacMurphy, a few years subsequent, removed to the town of Hill, in Grafton County, January 21, 1894. John Goodell of Hillsborough, N. H. wrote me these additional notes.

"The immediate successor of Daniel MacMurphy, on his farm, was Dea. Joseph Symonds, followed by his second son, William, and then by William's son, Frederick W. Symonds, who removed to Carthage, Ill., in 1847, and died there in 1853. Returning again to the Diary of Matthew Patten, we find on July 10, 1771 he Matthew Patten, went to Amherst, to Vendue Daniel MacMurphy's place in Hillsborough, but as there was no person appeared to purchase, and there was no vendue, he came home etc."

This period of our hero's life was precarious and unsettled, apparently ever upon the frontier of civilization, and somewhat beset with peril to himself and his family. In spite of all the difficulties and trials of pioneer living, he seems to have been able to raise a family of children. As may readily be inferred his children were growing to be companions to the mother, in the frequent absence of the patriotic father. Daniel MacMurphy was patriotic as we may conclude, from the fact of his enlistments in the defence of the frontier towns against the attacks of the Indians. We find in the records of this period, among the published State Papers, that Daniel MacMurphy was one of a party of sixteen young men from Londonderry, who enlisted as Scouts October 31, 1750. This was before he married, before he worked on the building of the Bridge over the Piscataquog River before he had taken up his farm at New Boston, before his settlement in Hillsborough. We may presume the scout life was naturally undertaken by the patriotic, and those who had the courage to face the dangers of pursuing the Indian trails far into the wilderness. The scout life may have fitted Daniel MacMurphy to serve his country in the perilous period of the American Revolution.

Companion Scouts.

The sixteen scouts, enlisted in Londonderry, October 8, 1750, were Daniel MacMurphy, James Ligget, James Campbell, Robert Gay, Moses Kennard, John Rogers, Joseph McKean, John White, John McAllister, Hugh Gilchrist, John Gray, John Mudgett, William Brown, Daniel Marr, William Dixon, and Alexander Hogg. These names are familiar, as being mainly found among the early settlers of the colony. James Ligget was part-proprietor of the fifty acres of homestead, laid out to the father of Daniel MacMurphy. In 1722, or immediately after the laying out of homesteads, James Ligget, quitclaimed all his interest in the homestead of his partner, Alexander MacMurphy, without other consideration than goodwill and friendship, and was probably an uncle of the companion scout Daniel MacMurphy. James Ligget then moved upon his second division of land, and there he lived and raised his family, during the period of the French and Indian Wars while Daniel MacMurphy moved to Derryfield, New Boston, Hillsborough, Hill and Alexandria and raised his family.

Some of the scouts of Londonderry were famous, and received promotion under the

colonial government. Of course it is understood that commissions given in the time of these French and Indian wars, were issued by the representatives of the British Parliament, in His Majesty's Province of New Hampshire in New England. John Stark of Londonderry first served as a scout, under a British commission as also John Rogers, James Ligget, Alexander MacMurphy, and Daniel MacMurphy. At the rupture between the colonists and the British Parliament, in 1775, some of the officers of these scouting parties declined to join the revolutionists, greatly distressing their families and neighbors. But when the decisive moment arrived, and the towns began to furnish men for the great American Revolution, the number who still clung to their British traditions was found to be small. The Revolutionary Rolls, found in our published State Papers, show the names of a large number of Daniel MacMurphy's relatives, enlisted for a longer or shorter term of years in the American army. Alexander MacMurphy, Archibald MacMurphy, Daniel MacMurphy, second, Alexander MacMurphy, second, George MacMurphy, William MacMurphy, Robert MacMurphy, John MacMurphy, and Sanders MacMurphy. These were all enlisted from Londonderry,

although some of them were reported from other towns. These ten persons were all of three families in this town, fathers and sons served together in the Revolution. About all the able bodied members of the family seemed to consider it a duty to assist in the hard struggle for American Independence.

In The Revolution

Before having access to State Papers, or Revolutionary rolls, or any knowledge of such means of hunting up records of soldiers, I depended upon traditions among the descendants, December 1, 1874, the Rev. Benjamin H. MacMurphy of Bristol, N. H., wrote me concerning this soldier of the Revolution: My grandfather, Daniel MacMurphy served as Lieutenant in the battle on Breed's Hill. He there fought behind the earths works, or breastworks, until he became discharged in point of gaining victory with sword in hand he rallied his men and scaled the breastworks, in doing so he received a ball in his right breast. Brave Warren fell, but the enemy were driven from the Hill with great slaughter, and American arms were victorious. My grandfather did not know he was wounded until the blood was gushing in his boots. He then returned to camp and lay all night

without his wound being dressed/being forgotten by Dr. Henry, he being all the officer wounded; all the rest who were shot were killed. The bullet shot in his right breast came out (Was cut out) at his back. I think it was about three weeks before he was on the field again."

This account of the wounding of Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy seems circumstantially probable; and the fact that the Rev. Benjamin Hoyt MacMurphy was born only twenty-five years after the battle of Bunker Hill, makes it reasonable, that he should have correct knowledge of his grandfathers service in the war especially is this true, when we know, that the death of the old, soldier did not occur until several years after the birth of the narrator.

In the History of Bristol by Richard R. Musgrove, published in 1904, we find in Vol. I, at pages 172-173, annals of the Revolutionary War, it is stated that Daniel MacMurphy of Alexandria was second Lieutenant, in a company of soldiers that marched from Plymouth to join other companies. They rendezvoused at Charlestown. Gen. John Stark took command, they marched to Manchester, Vt., reached there August 7th, 1777. They pressed on to Bennington, gave battle on

the 16th, August, defeated the enemy. Fourteen killed and forty-two wounded on the American side, among the latter, Lieut. MacMurphy.

In note at bottom of page 173, it is stated. Lieut. MacMurphy was shot through the body, but lived till Oct. 10, 1788, when he died, in the twenty-ninth year of his age. His remains were in the Burns burrying ground, just over the line in Alexandria."

These statements are manifestly incorrect, and should be reconciled with the facts. On October 27, 1908, in the company of Alvertus Norman MacMurphy of Alexandria, I visited the Burns cemetery, and found the grave referred to in the History of Bristol. I found a blue slate stone slab, "erected in memory of Lieut. Alexander MacMurphy, son of Mr. Robert and Mrs. Jane MacMurphy of Londonderry, N. H., who departed this life October 10th, 1788.

29 years of age.

Death steady to his purpose from the womb.

Pursues till we are drawn to its tomb
O reader wisely lay this thought to heart,
And seek an earnest in the better part."

There is no probability, that this person was the lieutenant shot through the body

at the battle of Bennington, August 16th, 1777. This young lieutenant was active in the wars of the Revolution, but not to be confounded with Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy. These Londonderry men of this family seem to have been pushing northward for new settlements, and chartering new townships. At least four men of the family appear in the application of this period asking for a new township: Alexander MacMurphy, Sanders MacMurphy, John MacMurphy, William MacMurphy, besides, Robert MacMurphy, and Daniel MacMurphy, those names also appear in the Revolutionary Rolls, more or less connected with the township of Alexandria, N. H.

The Revolutionary Rolls.

Here is a record found on page 124, State Papers, Vol. XV, Revolutionary Rolls Vol. II. Daniel MacMurphy, private, under Col. David Webster, from Alexandria, N. H., engaged July 5, 1777, discharged July 16, 1777, They started for Ticonderoga, met American troops returning, served only 10 days, wages 4 pounds, 10 shillings per month, allowed for miles traveled 2 lbs. 4 s. 2 d.

Same volume at page 149, we find Daniel MacMurphy, second lieutenant in Col. David Hobart's Regiment, under Capt. Edward

Elliott from Alexandria, N. H., engaged July 21, 1777, discharged September 27, 1777, wages per month 8 lbs. 2s, amount 18 lbs. 1 s. 10 d, the same place of residence, Alexandria, N. H. At page 158, Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy of Alexandria entitled to rations of two meals per day for 69 days, whole number 138, of which he took 41, having 97 due to him.

Vol. XVI, Roll III, page 321, we read that Lieut Daniel MacMurphy was drawing half pay, commencing September 18, 1777, reckoned in Continental currency, 124 lbs, 0 s, 0 d, and in new emission 132 lbs, 10 s, 0 d. On page 323 we find the half pay of Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy was kept up until May 1, 1785.

The same volume at page 325, shows us that Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy of Alexandria, N. H., received further consideration, by an Act of Congress passed June 7, 1785. Being disabled permanently wounded in the breast at battle of Bennington, he was pensioned as not being able to earn his living by manual labor, not fit to undertake even light garrison duties. His allowance was reckoned at 13 dollars and 30-90 per month; age 54 years. Same volume, at page 328, we read that Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy of Alexan-

dria, N. H., was examined for a pension, August 10th 1786, and began to draw pension July 31, 1786.

Same volume page 331, we read of Invalid Pensioners, Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy of Alexandria, 56 years of age, disabled August 16, 1777 at the battle of Bennington, pay commenced September 18, 1777 and was paid to July 31, 1789.

Page 334 Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy, pensioner received money.

February 1778 49lbs.-14s-0d.

April 6, 1779, 32 lbs.-8s-0d.

April 25, 1780, 51 lbs.-2s,-0d.

1781, 102 lbs.-10s-0d.

Page 337. 1783, 100 lbs. 18s-2d.

May 18, 1784, 40 lbs.-0s-0d.

Page 339. 1785, 46 lbs.-0s-0d.

Aug. 10, 1786, 50 lbs.-15s-5d.

July 31, 1787, 48 lbs.-0s-0d.

Aug. 6, 1788, 48 lbs.-0s-0d.

Aug 4, 1789, 48 lbs.-0s-0d.

Page 419. State of New Hampshire, Exeter, February 17, 1778.

Humbly shows Daniel MacMurphy a lieutenant in Capt. Elliott's company, in Col. Hobart's Regiment, in General Stark's Brigade, in the service of the State last year, when your petitioner had the misfortune to

be shot through the body by the enemy at Bennington, that your petitioner sent for a man and horse to bring him home to Alexandria, in the county of Grafton; that your petitioner has been put to great expense for physicians, nurses, board and getting home, which he prays may be allowed him and your petitioner, as in duty bound will ever pay, etc.

Daniel MacMurphy.

Peterborough 11th March 1778.

This certifies that the bearer, Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy of my Brigade was wounded in the battle of Bennington, and thereby rendered unfit and unable to get his subsistence, your honors by granting him proper relief will much oblige,

Your humble servant,

John Stark, B. G.

To the Honorable the council and House of Representatives, State of New Hampshire.

State of New Hampshire,

In Committee of Safety:
Exeter, July 29, 1783.

To Mr. Ephraim Robinson,

Paymaster of Invalids.

Please to certify to the Treasurer the sum due on the Invalid Roll to Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy, that he may receive a note

for the same, he being in great want thereof.

By order of Committee,

Nath'l. Folsom, Chairman.

State of New Hampshire.

This may certify that Daniel MacMurphy served as a lieutenant in Stark's Brigade of New Hampshire Militia, that he has produced a certificate of his having been disabled by a wound through his body, received at Bennington in the Service of the United States, and that we judge him to be entitled to a pension of four pounds a month.

Exeter, 10th August 1786.

Joseph Gilman,

Samuel Tenney.

Committee.

This may certify, that Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy is an inhabitant of the town of Alexandria, in the County of Grafton, and State of New Hampshire.

New Chester, August 4, 1788,
Sworn to before Carr Huse,

Justice Peace.

Grafton ss. State of New Hampshire,

Alexandria, July 29, 1789.

Then Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy came before me, one of Justices of Peace for the county of Grafton, in this State, and made oath, that he was examined by Joseph Gil-

man, Esq., and Samuel Tenney, two of the committee appointed by said State for that purpose, obtained a certificate, and that he now lives in the town of Alexandria in said county of Grafton.

Sworn to before me,

Joshua, Tolford,

Justice of the Peace.

His Family.

Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy's wife was Mary Tolford, probably connected already with the family by marriage, possibly a sister of the Joshua Tolford, Justice of the Peace, on the last page. The best that can be done with the birth of the children is to give their names, in the order in which they were traditionally given to me, by some descendants of the family living in the town of Alexandria, N. H.

FIRST, William MacMurphy, lived on the home place, appointed administrator of his deceased fathers estate, married Annise McGregor, December 31, 1782, and had these children: Margaret, Tolford, Mary, Elizabeth and David.

Second. Alexander MacMurphy, or Sanders MacMurphy, possibly there were two persons. Sanders died April 19, 1844 and was 86 years of age. His wife was Mary

Palmer, died July 11, 1840, aged 83. Their children were Daniel and Mary, the former being the ancestor of present families of the name in Alexandria. This Daniel was born Aug. 27, 1788, died July 2, 1846.

THIRD. Isabel MacMurphy, with descendants and grand son, Paul F. Littlefield.

FOURTH. John Tolford MacMurphy, born April 1, 1768, died October 17, 1857, married Abigail Hoyt, born August 11, 1777 died November 3, 1859. Children, Rev. Benjamin H., born Feb. 28, 1801, died Feb. 11, 1882. Ruth A. born April 11, 1803, died 1887. Mary T., born Aug. 2, 1805, died 1853. Hannah H., born March 7, 1807, died 1875. Abby H. born April 14, 1808. John, born Dec. 18, 1812.

FIFTH. David MacMurphy went West, was married and had children. There was among them a David MacMurphy, Jr. Among my copies of letters may be found one of David's letters of considerable interest, because it was written before the mail was carried by railroads, David MacMurphy, Jr., reached his father December 10, 1829, at Munroe, in Pope County, Ill.

SIXTH. Molly MacMurphy, was married to Saunders Simonds of Alexandria. Probably her name should have come first, They had a very large family of children,

and grand children, and great grand children.

I have referred to Alexander MacMurphy, as a soldier from Alexandria, but do not know if he was a son of Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy, although it seems probable; as in the Pension Reports of June 1, 1840 he is spoken of as receiving a pension at the age 80 years, and living in the family of Daniel MacMurphy, who was a grandson of the Lieutenant. He could not have been the same man as Sanders MacMurphy, for the latter was also a pensioner, and drew an annual pension of \$96.00 in the New Hampshire Continental Line, commencing May 8th, 1819, aged 74 years.

Some Conclusions.

In my earliest inquiries I learned from my uncle James MacMurphy, born only twenty years after the Revolutionary wars, and on the same place where his grandfather, James MacMurphy, had lived; that his grandfather's brothers: George, Daniel and John, were in the Revolutionary wars. They had all been frequent visitors to the brother in Londonderry. It is quite possible, that the James MacMurphy, who was a Sergeant in Captain Alexander Todd's Company, in Col. John Hart's Regiment, o:

800 men, raised in this vicinity in 1758, to go on the expedition to Ticonderoga, may have been my great grandfather. But I do not find, that he had any part in the military services of his country, after the rupture between the Colonists and the British Parliament.

George MacMurphy was corporal in Captain (afterwards General) George Reid's Company of soldiers, raised in Londonderry, at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, in 1775.

From time to time the Alexandria relatives of the Londonderry family revisited this town, and renewed their relations, and recited their mutual interests and traditions.

As far back as 1874, I took up the traditions of my uncle James MacMurphy, got into communication with the Rev. Benjamin Hoyt MacMurphy, then seventy-three years of age, with the result that I obtained a large number of records of marriages, births, deaths, etc., from him, and he gave me the account of his grandfather's service in the Revolution. He may have been wrong, as to the place of battle, where his grandfather, Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy was shot through the body, but the State Papers otherwise support and confirm his traditions.

In the fall of 1908, I visited these distant relatives in Alexandria, and was entertained at the homes of Mr. and Mrs. Alvertus Norman MacMurphy, and Mr. and Mrs. Silas Alfred MacMurphy. While there they took pleasure in showing me the old burying places, the graves of their ancestors, the soldiers monuments, etc. When I came to inquire for the grave of their great grandfather, Lieut. Daniel MacMurphy, they brought me to an orchard field on a farm, and pointed to a corner in the wall, and said they had always understood he was buried there; without any sign of a mound, or a marker, of any kind, and no fence, or partition, from the open field and orchard.

And so a man who served his country as a lieutenant, and was disabled for life, at the battle of Bennington, the father of a family, died in a good old age; is buried in an open field, in an unmarked grave, his deeds unknown to fame, his name forgotten, except to the few, who search the State Papers and Revolutionary Rolls, and vainly look through the cemeteries in Alexandria to find the conventional symbol of this Revolutionary Soldier.

